# Several REASONS

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## Proving that Inoculating or Transplanting the *Small Pox*, is a Lawful Practice, and that it has been Blessed by GOD for the Saving of many a Life.

By *Increase Mather*, D. D.

Exod. XX. 13. *Thou shalt not kill.*

Gal. I. 10. *Do I seek to please Men? if I please Men, I should not be a Servant of* CHRIST.

It has been Questioned, Whether *Inoculating* the *Small Pox* be a Lawful Practice. I incline to the Affirmative, for these Reasons.

I. BEcause I have read, that in *Smyrna*, *Constantinople*, and other Places, Thousands of Lives have been saved by Inoculation, and not one of Thousands has miscarried by it. This is related by Wise & Learned Men who would not have imposed on the World a false Narrative. Which also has been published by the *Royal Society*; therefore a great Regard is due to it.

II. WE hear that several *Physicians* have Recommended the Practice hereof to His *Majesty*, as a Means to preserve the Lives of his Subjects, and that His Wise and Excellent *Majesty King GEORGE*, & also his *Royal Highness* the *Prince* have approved thereof, and that it is now coming into practice in the Nation. In one of the Publick Prints are these Words, "*Inoculating the Small Pox is a safe and universally Useful Experiment.* Several Worthy Persons lately arrived from *England* inform us, that it is a successful Practice there: If Wise & Learned Men in *England*, declare their Approbation of this *Practice*, for us to declare our Disapprobation will not be for our Honour.

III. GOD has graciously owned the *Practice of Inoculation*, among us in *Boston*, where some Scores, yea above an hundred have been *Inoculated*, & not one miscarried; but they Bless GOD, for His discovering this Experiment to them. It has been objected, that one that was Inoculated, died, viz. Mrs. *D——ll:* but she had the *Small Pox*, in the common way before, & her Friends and nearest Relations declare that she received no hurt by *Inoculation*, but was by a fright put into Fits that caused her Death. It is then a wonderful Providence of GOD, that all that were *Inoculated* should have their Lives preserved; so that the Safety and Usefulness of this Experiment is confirmed to us by Ocular Demonstration: I confess I am afraid, that the Discouraging of this Practice, may cause many a Life to be lost, which for my own part, I should be loth to have any hand in, *because of the Sixth Commandment.*

IV. IT cannot be denied but that some Wise and Judicious Persons among us, approve of Inoculation, both *Magistrates* and *Ministers*; Among Ministers I am One, who have been a poor Preacher of the Gospel in *Boston* above Threescore Years, and am the most Aged, Weak and unworthy Minister now in *New-England*. My Sentiments, and my Son's also, about this *Matter* are well known. Also we hear that the Reverend and Learned Mr. *Solomon Stoddard* of *Northampton* concurs with us; so doth the Reverend Mr. *Wise* of *Ipswich*, and many other younger Divines, not only in *Boston*, but in the Country, joyn with their Fathers. Furthermore I have made some Enquiry, Whether there are many Persons of a Prophane Life and Conversation, that do Approve and Defend *Inoculation*, and I have been answered, that they know but of very few such. This is to me a weighty Consideration: But on the other hand, tho' there are some Worthy Persons, that are not clear about it; nevertheless, it cannot be denied, but that the known Children of the Wicked one, are generally fierce Enemies to Inoculation. It is a grave saying of Old *Seneca*, *Pessimi Argumentum Turba est.* For my part I should be ashamed to joyn with such Persons; *O my Soul come not thou into their Secret, unto their Assembly be not thou United.* I am far from reflecting upon all that are against *Inoculation*. I know there are very worthy Persons (with whom I desire to Live and Die) that are not clear in their Judgments for it, and they are greatly to be commended and honoured in that they will not act against a doubting Conscience; yet it may be some of them might change their minds, if they would advise with those who are best able to afford them Scripture Light in this as well as in other Cases of Conscience.

*Novemb.* 20. 1721.

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*That the Cause may have Two Witnesses, here are subjoined the Sentiments of another, well known in our Churches, of which I declare my hearty Approbation.*

## Sentiments on the Small Pox Inoculated.

*A most Successful, and Allowable Method of preventing* Death, *and many other grievous Miseries, by the* Small Pox, *is not only* Lawful *but a* Duty *to be used by those who apprehend their Lives immediately endanger'd by the terrible Distemper.*

*But the Method of managing and governing the* Small Pox *in the way of* Inoculation, *is a most successful and allowable Method of preventing* Death *and many other grievous Miseries by this dreadful Distemper. Therefore, 'tis not only* Lawful, *but also*

a Duty *to make use of it. None but very foolish, and very wicked People will deny the* Proposition *in this Argument*; *The* Assumption *is all that is disputed. But now, That this is a most* Successful *Method we have all the Evidence that Humane Reason can ask for. Men of Honour, and Learning, and Inconteſtible Veracity, not one or two, but a conſiderable Number of them, agree in the Relation they give us, of it's being uſed with* conſtant Succeſs *in the* Levant. *It has been uſed upon vaſt Multitudes, even many Thouſands, and for ſome Scores of Years: And when regularly uſed, it yet appears not, that ever* one Perſon *miſcarried of it, or had the* Small Pox *after it. We have ſufficient Proofs that it is a* growing Practice *in thoſe Countries. If it had been unſucceſsful, or been attended with bad Conſequences, it muſt needs have been put out of Countenance, and have ceaſed long ago. Such Teſtimonies on the other ſide, as our People have been frighted withal, are not worth a Straw. No Man of Senſe that conſiders them can lay weight upon them: Ask us not, why we ſay ſo!*

*And we have an Army of* Africans *among our ſelves, who have themſelves been under it, and given us all the Aſſurance, which a Rational Mind can deſire, that it has long been uſed with the like Succeſs in* Africa. *Nay, Behold, ye yourſelves have ſeen it. The Operation has been performed on an Hundred & more, in the Town of* Boſton: *And not one of them has miſcarried: They have every one of them hitherto done well. They all give Thanks to our Merciful Redeemer for leading them into it. They would every one of them rather undergo it again, and many times over, than ſuffer the* Small Pox *as People ordinarily ſuffer it in the common way of Infection. The Story of* one *Dying after it, is trump'd up with ſo much folly and falſhood, that it is unworthy to have any Anſwer given to it. In fine; Experience has declared, that there never was a more* unfailing Remedy *employed among the Children of Men.*

*That this is an* Allowable *Method, is plain; becauſe there can be no Objection brought againſt it, but what will alſo lie againſt the uſe of almoſt all the* preventing Phyſick, *that is uſed in the World. The Objector muſt maintain, That it is unlawful for a Man, who would preſerve his Life and Health, to* make himſelf Sick *in a way that conſtantly tends to Preſervation. But a very Familiar Caſe will ſo illuſtrate the Matter, as to put it beyond all Diſpute. Suppoſe, There is a* Bloody Flux *prevailing in the Town where I live, which proves Mortal to a great part of them that have it; many more than Four Hundred periſh by it in a Month. A Phyſician is Maſter of a* Purge; *which whoſoever takes it, is in an ordinary way, delivered from the danger of that Mortal Diſtemper. An* Artificial Purge *ſeaſonably taken ſaves him from Death by the* Natural Purge, *which he is expoſed unto. Will any ſcruple the taking of this* Artificial Purge? *Surely, None but ſuch as want a Purge of* Hellebore! *Here the Man* makes Himſelf Sick, *while He is well: and thinks that he is not* the whole who has no need of a Phyſician, *while he has the* Humours *in him which render him Noxious to a* Deadly Sickneſs. *He won't think it his Duty to ſtay till God ſend the Sickneſs in* another way *upon him; when it will be too late for him to ſeek relief; But he will give Thanks to* GOD *for teaching him, how to* make himſelf Sick, *in a way that will ſave his Life. He moſt properly* takes GOD's Time to fall Sick: *He does it ſeaſonably, and in the* Time *when* GOD *has* commanded *him to do it.*

*Many Good People, who are ſenſible how weak their own Judgments are, will for a* Caſe of Conſcience *be much aſſiſted by the Judgments of the moſt able Divines in the Country. Now every Body knows how they concur in their approbation of this Practice.*

*The* Deſign *and the* Spirit, *(evidently of no good Original) with which the fierce oppoſition to this Practice is carried on will alſo go a great way towards determining of Good People in Favour of it. The* Concluſion *will be Victorious; That when People have their Lives endangered by the* Small Pox *hovering about them, they not only* may *uſe the Method of Inoculation, to ſave their Lives, but they even* ought to do it, *if they can. They keep not in good Terms with the* Sixth Commandment, *if they do it not.*

## INFERENCES.

I. *Hence the Phyſicians may do well to beware of going too far, and of taking wrong ſteps, in the frighting of People from this Practice, leſt they ſhould have* more to anſwer for *than Men of that Profeſſion ſhould be willing to.*

II. *Hence, the* Parents, *and* Maſters, *and* Husbands *and* Wives *whoſe Relatives have beg'd as for their Lives, that they might have leave to ſave their Lives by this Method, ſhould not by their obſtinate Will hinder them from it, leaſt on the* Loſs of their Lives *they have ſad matter of Reflection left unto them.*

III. *Hence, a People will do well, not to be too haſty in Reſolves, that ſhould forbid their Neighbours, to do what God has made their* Duty *for the Preſervation of their Lives in this Method; leſt they do in Effect* forbid Obedience to the Sixth Commandment. *Eſpecially, when the Bugbear of the* Peſtilential Conſequences, *is a* Falſhood, *that has not the leaſt ſhadow of* Reaſon *for it, and has the* Experience *of all the Countries under Heaven, where they uſe the* Inoculation, *to confute it. Nor has it ever been known of Later Ages, that the* Plague *ever began any where but in the* Eaſt-Indies, *from whence it has always been brought unto the Weſtern World. And when the* King, *and* Prince, *and moſt Eminent Phyſicians in* London *and* Dublin, *and elſewhere, have declared their Approbation of it; it ſeems not much for our Honour, to declare that we diſapprove it.*

IV. *Hence to Rave, and Rail with ſuch bitter* Execrations, *as are too commonly uſed, againſt the* Miniſters *and other ſerious* Chriſtians, *who favour this Practice is a very crying Iniquity; and to call it a* Work *of the* Devil, *and a* going to the Devil, *is a ſhocking* Blaſphemy; *and much more likely to bring the* Plague *among us, than the Practice, which they ſo ignorantly and maliciouſly do charge with ſuch Imaginary Conſequences.*

FINIS.

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